

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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R 120735Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4274
INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL NAHA
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MPOL, MASS, KS, JA, US
SUBJECT: CODEL STRATTON VISIT TO JAPAN

REF: (A) SEOUL 0108, (B) COMUS K P 080715 JAN 78 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: DURING VISIT TO JAPAN TO DETERMINE IMPACT OF WITHDRAWAL OF US GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA, CODEL STRATTON HAD FRUITFUL EXCHANGES OF VIEWS WITH JAPANESE GOVERNMENT LEADERS AND CONSERVATIVE DIET MEMBERS. PRESS COVERAGE OF VISIT, HOWEVER, FOCUSED ON PERIPHERAL ISSUES RATHER THAN DELEGATION'S FINDINGS IN JAPAN. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ADDITION TO EMBASSY AND US MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES IN JAPAN, CODEL STRATTON MET WITH RIGHT WING LDP DIET MEMBERS AND CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA, DEFENSE AGENCY DIRGEN KANEMARU AND VICE FOREIGN MINISTER ARITA. AT ALL SESSIONS CHAIRMAN STRATTON RESTATED

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CODEL'S THREE PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND FOUR PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS ANNOUNCED IN PRE-DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE IN SEOUL AND GENERALLY REITERATED THEMES OUTLINED IN REFTELS.

3. FUKUDA, KANEMARU, AND ARITA ALL REPLIED THAT STABILITY ON KOREAN PENINSULA WAS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO JAPAN AND EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT COMPENSATORY PACKAGE OF MILITARY

AID MIGHT NOT RECEIVE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL DUE TO TONG SUN PARK AFFAIR. IN THIS EVENTUALITY, THEY ARGUED, TROOP WITHDRAWAL SHOULD NOT PROCEED AS THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE TOO SERIOUS. PRIME MINISTER RELATED THAT WHEN WITHDRAWAL WAS FIRST DISCUSSED WITH HIM (DURING JANUARY 1977 MONDALE VISIT), HE HAD STATED HIS CONVICTION THAT ROK SHOULD BE BOTH "CONSULTED AND CONVINCED" AND THAT APPROPRIATE COMPENSATORY ACTIONS BE TAKEN TO MAINTAIN MILITARY BALANCE. CHAIRMAN STRATTON URGED GOJ LEADERSHIP TO EXPRESS ITS CONCERNS TO CARTER ADMINISTRATION NOTING THAT, THOUGH ROK LEADERSHIP PUBLICLY ACCEPTED WITHDRAWAL PROPOSAL, VARIOUS OF ITS MEMBERS HAD PRIVATELY EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS. HE ALSO STATED THAT "NOTHING WAS WRITTEN IN STONE" CONCERNING WITHDRAWAL PROPOSAL AND THAT CONGRESS WOULD PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN SHAPING "COMPROMISE" ON ISSUES OF COMPENSATORY MEASURES AND TIMING. THERE WAS LITTLE PRESS COVERAGE OF CODEL'S CALLS ON GOJ LEADERSHIP EXCEPT FOR A KYOKO ITEM NOTING THAT CHAIRMAN STRATTON HAD AGREED WITH PRIME MINISTER TO ENCOURAGE US LEGISLATORS TO SUPPORT FREE TRADE, A POINT CHAIRMAN PROBABLY VIEWED AS INCIDENTAL TO MAIN PURPOSE OF MEETING PM.

4. CODEL HAD LENGTHY MEETINGS WITH TWO DIFFERENT GROUPS OF RIGHT WING LDP DIET MEMBERS. THE FIRST, AN "OLD RIGHT" GROUP ORGANIZED BY NOBORU MINOWA, INCLUDED SUCH SENIOR LDP STALWARTS AS FORMER LOWER HOUSE SPEAKER NAKA FUNADA,

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MINORU GENDA AND MASAO HORIE; GROUP SEEKS TO ESTABLISH A "JAPAN-US SECURITY COUNCIL" WHICH WOULD SERVE AS A "SECURITY LOBBY" VIS-A-VIS BOTH GOVERNMENTS. THE SECOND IS A "NEW RIGHT" GROUP LED BY EIICHI NAKAO AND LARGELY MADE UP OF SEIRANKAI MEMBERS SUCH AS SHINTARO ISHIHARA, SADANORI YAMANAKA, MASAYUKI FUJIO AND MICHIO WATANABE. NAKAO GROUP ALSO DESIRES TO ESTABLISH A "SECURITY LOBBY" IN FORM OF A SO-CALLED "JAPAN-US INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL". BOTH GROUPS URGED CODEL TO SERVE AS FORMAL US COUNTERPART IN NEW ORGANIZATIONS. CHAIRMAN STRATTON REPLIED THAT DELEGATION HAD NO AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH SUCH FORMAL TIES BUT THAT CONTINUED INFORMAL MEETINGS COULD TAKE PLACE. DESPITE THESE DEMURRERS, BOTH GROUPS ISSUED PRESS RELEASES OUTLINING DELEGATION'S ANNOUNCED VIEWS ON KOREA AND STATING THAT CODEL HAD AGREED TO FORMAL TIES WITH THE RESPECTIVE GROUPS. THESE STORIES WERE COVERED EXTENSIVELY BY MOST NEWSPAPERS.

5. COMMENT: ATMOSPHERE - ALL METINGS WITH GOVERNMENT LEADERS AND DIET MEMBERS WERE HELD IN WARM AND INFORMAL ATMOSPHERE AND FRUITFUL EXCHANGES OF VIEWS TOOK PLACE. (CALLS ON PM AND KANEMARU BOTH RAN WELL BEYOND SCHEDULED

TIMES.) AN ABSERVER WHOSE ONLY SOURCE OF INFORMATION WAS THE JAPANESE PRESS, HOWEVER, WOULD HAVE RECEIVED A SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT VIEW OF PROCEEDINGS THAN WHAT ACTUALLY TRANSPired. AS CODEL DID NOT HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE, MEDIA'S ONLY SOURCES OF INFORMATION WERE JAPANESE WITH WHOM CODEL MET. COVERAGE THUS PRIMARILY REFLECTED CONCERNS AND INTERESTS OF THOSE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS RATHER THAN THOSE OF CODEL.

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